

**Poster Title:** Assessing and Monitoring Floatable Debris

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**Key Words:** floatables, marine debris, trash, BEACH Act, National Marine Debris Monitoring Program

**Description:**

Marine debris, often called litter or floating debris, continue to be a problem along shorelines, coastal waters, estuaries, and oceans throughout the world. In October, 2000, the Beaches Environmental Assessment and Coastal Health (BEACH) Act was enacted to reduce the risk of disease to users of the Nation's coastal recreation waters. Among other things, the act authorizes EPA to provide technical assistance to States and local governments for the assessment and monitoring of floatable debris. In partially fulfilling that obligation, EPA has developed a document entitled *Assessing and Monitoring Floatable Debris*. It is a compilation of the most current information to date regarding efforts to assess, monitor, and mitigate the impacts of marine debris in US waters and abroad. Contact and other useful information is provided to help tailor programs to fit specific needs. EPA, along with other Federal agencies, helped to design the National Marine Debris Monitoring Program (NMDMP), and EPA is supporting The Ocean Conservancy's implementation of the study. NMDMP is designed to gather scientifically valid marine debris data following a rigorous statistical protocol. This scientific study is conducted every 28 days by teams of volunteers at randomly selected study sites along the U.S. coastline. The NMDMP calls for the establishment of 180 monitoring sites and to date 163 study sites have been designated (128 are collecting data). The program will run for a 5-year period once all of the study sites have been established.